

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 4603

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, MX

SUBJ: CONVERSATION OF ARIZONA GOVERNOR CASTRO/ATTORNEY GENERAL
OJEDA PAULLADA ON NARCOTICS

DEA HEADQUARTERS FOR BARTELS

1. THE AMBASSADOR ACCOMPANIED GOVERNOR RAUL CASTRO OF ARIZONA TO A LUNCHEON ALSO ATTENDED BY PEDRO OJEDA PAULLADA. AFTER THE LUNCHEON THERE WAS AN APPORTUNITY FOR THE THREE OF THEM TO SPEAK ALONE AND THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS WERE DISCUSSED:

(1) CASTRO EMPHASIZED THAT TUCSON WAS NOW THE MAJOR MAFIA CENTER OF DRUG DISTRIBUTION NORTH OF THE MEXICAN BORDER. (2) GOV-ERNOR CASTRO STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF BRINGING THE STATE NARCOTICS AGENTS INTO A COORDINATED PARTICIPATION IN THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST NARCOTICS. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THERE ARE TEN TIMES AS MANY STATE AGENTS AS FEDERAL AGENTS IN ARIZONA.

(3) OJEDA PAUALLADA (WITH A SOMEWHAT HIGH-HANDED MANNER) STRESSED THAT WHILE IT WAS WELL TO COORDINATE DRUG ACTIVITIES AMONG US AGENTS, AS REGARDS MEXICO IT WAS NOT A QUESTION OF COORDINATION BUT OF COMMANDING AND HE WAS THE COMMANDER. HE STRESSED THAT GOVERNOR CASTRO SHOULD DEAL DIRECTLY WITH HIM ON NARCOTICS MATTERS AND NOT ATTEMPT TO COORDINATE WITH GOVERNOR BIEBRICH OF THE STATE OF SONORA. 4). CASTRO RAISED THE MATTER OF CONFISCATED AMERICAN AIRPLANES. OJEDA
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SAID IT WAS REGRETABLE THAT SOME MEXICAN OFFICIALS FELT

THE CAPTURED AIRPLANES WERE EQUIVALENT TO WAR BOOTY. REGRETABLE AS THIS WAS IT WAS A FACT OF LIFE AND HE INDICATED THAT PRESIDENT HAD NOT OPPOSED THAT POSITION OF THE MILITARY ON THIS. LEGALLY AN AIRPLANE COULD BE CONSIDERED MERELY AN INSTRUMENT OF CONTRABAND AND IF THE OWNER'S INNOCENCE WERE PROVED IT MIGHT BE RELEASED. HOWEVER, IN LEGAL TERMS IT WAS ALSO TRUE THAT AN AIRPLANE WHICH FAILED TO REGISTER ON ARRIVAL AT AN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN ACCORDANCE WITH FLIGHT PLAN WAS ALSO IN THE COUNTRY ILLEGALLY AND WAS ITSELF CONTRABAND RATHER THAN MERELY AN INSTRUMENT OF CONTRABAND AND THUS SUBJECT TO CONFISCATION.

2. BOTH AMBASSADOR AND GOVERNOR PRESSED FOR COMMITMENT THAT EACH PLANE SHOULD BE STUDIED ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS AND THOSE THAT SEEM TO BE BONA FIDE BE RELEASED. MADE POINT THAT SUCH SELECTIVE RELEASE WOULD STRENGTHEN POSITION OF GOM IN REGARD TO KEEPING AIRCRAFT WHICH WERE CONSIDERED TRULY GUILTY.

3. OJEDA MENTIONED THAT MATTER OF PLANES HAD NOT BEEN RAISED DURING HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON. INDICATED THAT HE WAS WILLING TO CONTINUE STUDYING THE MATTER BUT QUITE FRANKLY, DID NOT GIVE US MUCH HOPE IN VIEW OF THE PRESIDENT'S RELUCTANCE TO CONTRADICT THE MILITARY IN THIS MATTER.

4. OJEDA WAXED ECSTATIC CONCERNING THE TREATMENT HE HAD RECEIVED IN WASHINGTON AND HIS SATISFACTION WITH THE RESULTS OF HIS VISIT.

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